

Message Text

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SUBJ: FRANCOPHONE PRESS REACTION TO REPORT ON GOC BILINGUALISM
POLICY

REF: OTTAWA'S 3356

1. LEADING MONTREAL FRANCOPHONE DAILIES OF AUGUST 19 CARRIED
EDITORIALS CRITICIZING THE BIBEAU REPORT AND THE GOVERNMENT'S
POLICY OF BILINGUALISM.

2. LE DEVOIR'S EDITOR-IN-CHIEF CHARACTERIZED THE BIBEAU REPORT
AS INCLUDING SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AND GIVING ALL OPPONENTS A
CHANCE TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO". THE STUDY DEMONSTRATED CLEARLY
THAT THE BILINGUALISM PROGRAM HAS BEEN A FAILURE. HOWEVER,
THE EDITORIAL CONTINUES, THE BIBEAU COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR ACTION DO NOT FOLLOW LOGICALLY FROM THE FINDINGS OF ITS STUDY.
LE DEVOIR'S REVIEW OF THE IMPORTANT POINTS BROUGHT OUT IN THE
REPORT INCLUDES THE COMMENTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT GOOFED IN DESIGN-
ING BILINGUAL POSITIONS SO THAT MANY WHO SUCCEEDED IN LEARNING
FRENCH DESPITE THE POOR QUALITY OF THE INSTRUCTION OFFERED DO NOT
HAVE OCCASION TO SPEAK FRENCH IN THEIR JOBS. THE TEACHING STAFF
IS INEXPERIENCED AND POORLY PREPARED AND THE TEACHING METHODS ARE
OUTMODDED. THE ANGLOPHONE FUNCTIONARIES MADE TO LEARN ANOTHER
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LANGUAGE ARE LEFT WITH SERIOUS ANXIETY PROBLEMS WHILE FRANCOPHONE

FUNCTIONARIES DO NOT REALLY HAVE A CHOICE OF WORKING LANGUAGE AND HAVE TO LEARN ENGLISH TO SURVIVE. COMING AS IT DOES DURING A LANGUAGE CRISIS, THE BIBEAU REPORT IS NOT LIKELY TO SIMPLIFY THE GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS. IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL ANNOUNCE CHANGES IN ITS BILINGUALISM POLICY AND THOSE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY GO BEYOND THE "ADJUSTMENTS" TO WHICH MINISTER CHRETIEN REFERRED. CANADA'S BILINGUALISM PROBLEMS ARE NOT DUE TO A MERE LACK OF UNDERSTANDING BY THE PEOPLE AND IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN TO SOLVE THEM.

3. LA PRESSE'S EDITORIAL ALSO CONCLUDES THAT THE POLICY OF BILINGUALISM HAS BEEN A FAILURE, ADDING THAT THE IRONY OF IT ALL IS THAT THIS POLICY IS THE RESULT OF PLANNING, AND THE DAILY HAS A DEFINITE RECOMMENDATION AS TO WHAT THE POLICY SHOULD BE. THE BASIC PROBLEM, THE EDITORIAL STATES, IS FULL ACCEPTANCE BY ANGLOPHONES OF THE RIGHT OF FRANCOPHONES TO RECEIVE FEDERAL SERVICES IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE. THAT IS AS FAR AS BILINGUALISM CAN BE EXPECTED TO GO IN CANADA. IT IS, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MINIMUM NECESSARY TO ASSURE THE CONTINUED UNITY OF THE COUNTRY. THE FEDERAL LIBERALS MADE USE OF TRUDEAU AND HIS FRANCOPHONE LIEUTENANTS TO CALM THE APPREHENSION OF ENGLISH CANADA AND MAINTAIN ITSELF IN POWER. THE GROWING HOSTILITY OF MANY ANGLOPHONES WITH REGARD TO BILINGUALISM SHOWS THAT THE ACCEPTANCE OF FRENCH IT OTTAWA HAS BEEN BARTERED AGAINST THE ASSURANCE THAT TRUDEAU WOULD KEEP QUEBEC IN THE FEDERATION. HOWEVER, NOW THAT THE IDEA OF QUEBEC'S SECESSION FRIGHTENS FEWER PEOPLE OR LEAVES THEM COLD, "THE CULTURAL IMPERIALISM" OF MANY ANGLOPHONES IS SPRINGING UP AGAIN. INSTEAD OF WORRYING ABOUT REPATRIATING THE BNA, A DOCUMENT OF INCREASINGLY LITTLE USEFULNESS, TRUDEAU SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO ASSURE HIMSELF THAT ANGLOPHONE CANADA REALLY WANTS TO KEEP THE COUNTRY TOGETHER. BUT UNITY HAS A PRICE. IT IS THE PRESENCE IN OTTAWA OF FRANCOPHONE FUNCTIONARIES AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ADMINISTRATION. IT IS NOT BY TEACHING FRENCH TO ANGLOPHONES THAT THE PUBLIC SERVICES CAN BE MADE BILINGUAL. WE SHOULD STOP KIDDING OURSELVES. THE ANGLOPHONES, WHO ARE IN A MAJORITY, HAVE NO MOTIVATION TO LEARN FRENCH. IT IS THEREFORE THE FRANCOPHONE CANADIANS, "FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES THE ONLY REALLY BILINGUAL CANADIANS", WHO MUST FILL THE REALLY BILINGUAL POSITIONS IN OTTAWA. THE PUBLIC SERVICE MUST NOT EXIST TO CREATE JOBS AND CAREERS FOR THE ANGLOPHONE MAJORITY BUT TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR

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THE ENTIRE COUNTRY.
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